

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 129

June 25, 1997, 5:02 pm
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BALANCED BUDGET ACT/Public Funding of Minors' Abortions

SUBJECT: Balanced Budget Act of 1997 . . . S. 947. Kerrey modified amendment No. 496.

ACTION: AMENDMENT REJECTED, 39-61

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 947, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, will make net mandatory spending reductions to achieve the savings necessary to balance the budget by 2002 and to provide the American people with tax relief. This bill is the first reconciliation bill that is required by H.Con. Res. 84, the Budget Resolution for fiscal year (FY) 1998 (see vote No. 92). The second bill will provide tax relief (see vote No. 160).

The Kerrey modified amendment would strike the prohibition in this bill on paying for abortions for minors (except in rape, incest, or life-of-the-mother cases) using funds in this bill that will be given to provide health care coverage to currently uninsured children (\$16 billion will be provided over 5 years; the Finance Committee has agreed to provide an additional \$8 billion on the tax relief bill that will be considered after this bill; see vote No. 135).

Those favoring the amendment contended:

Every year in the appropriations process Congress passes restrictions on using public funds to pay for abortions. Those restrictions do not exist in permanent law. This bill will put such restrictions into permanent law for the funding for the initiative to make sure that children have health insurance coverage. Essentially, what this permanent-law restriction will do is deny low-income teenagers public funds to have abortions. We do not think that is fair. No other permanent-law restriction exists, and we do not tell Federal workers that they cannot use the money that they have earned to get abortions, even though that money comes from the taxpayers too. Therefore, we favor the Kerrey amendment.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

Abortion is not just another medical procedure. Tens of millions of Americans strongly oppose it because they believe it is the

(See other side)

YEAS (39)			NAYS (61)			NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans (5 or 9%)	Democrats (34 or 76%)		Republicans (50 or 91%)	Democrats (11 or 24%)		Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)
Campbell	Akaka	Kerry	Abraham	Helms	Biden		
Chafee	Baucus	Landrieu	Allard	Hutchinson	Breaux		
Jeffords	Bingaman	Lautenberg	Ashcroft	Hutchison	Byrd		
Specter	Boxer	Leahy	Bennett	Inhofe	Cleland		
Stevens	Bryan	Levin	Bond	Kempthorne	Conrad		
	Bumpers	Lieberman	Brownback	Kyl	Dorgan		
	Daschle	Mikulski	Burns	Lott	Ford		
	Dodd	Moseley-Braun	Coats	Lugar	Graham		
	Durbin	Moynihan	Cochran	Mack	Johnson		
	Feingold	Murray	Collins	McCain	Kohl		
	Feinstein	Reed	Coverdell	McConnell	Reid		
	Glenn	Robb	Craig	Murkowski			
	Harkin	Rockefeller	D'Amato	Nickles			
	Hollings	Sarbanes	DeWine	Roberts			
	Inouye	Torricelli	Domenici	Roth			
	Kennedy	Wellstone	Enzi	Santorum			
	Kerrey	Wyden	Faircloth	Sessions			
			Frist	Shelby			
			Gorton	Smith, Bob			
			Gramm	Smith, Gordon			
			Grams	Snowe			
			Grassley	Thomas			
			Gregg	Thompson			
			Hagel	Thurmond			
			Hatch	Warner			

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

taking of an innocent human life, and tens of millions more have very mixed feelings about it. Most Americans are against abortions except in extreme circumstances, and they do not want to be taxed to pay for them. Even the strongest defenders of abortion are troubled by the numbers that are performed each year, and have adopted the mantra that they want to keep it safe, legal, and "rare." Why "rare" if it is just another medical procedure? In keeping with the wishes of the vast majority of the American people, the United States Congress for years has been imposing restrictions on the use of taxpayer funds to pay for abortions. Our colleagues want to make an exception to this long-standing policy by using child health insurance funds in this bill to pay for abortions, for any reason and without restriction, for low-income teenagers. We believe that it would be a sick twist on this noble effort to provide health care to insure children in America if we used the money to pay for abortion-on-demand for teenage children. We are voting for this aid to save lives, not to take them. Therefore, we strongly urge the rejection of the Kerrey amendment.